

anyone, who's maybe even ignorant of the law, will run afoul of the law. That individual will feel the full weight of what passes today for our system of justice in this state, which in my opinion leaves much to be desired. There will be editorials, pro and con, mostly in support of the bill. And there will be those who will rant and rail against those of us who speak against the bill. But, ladies and gentlemen, to me it is not the crimes committed by handguns that are filling our prison system. The crimes that are filling our prison systems are totally different. But what is really filling our prison system is the fact that today our court system views those who commit crimes in a totally different manner. If an individual has enough influence, and if you have enough money, or you know enough people, ladies and gentlemen, the system of justice does not work the same as it does for those who do not possess those material benefits. And it is my concern that if we enact this bill into law today, we are handing to those individuals who want to, in effect, exert authority over others, one additional tool which they will use with indiscriminate force, and I'm against it. I have traveled around the world and I have been in countries where only the military and only the police have weapons. And I can tell you very frankly it is not a comfortable feeling. The people are cowed, they are submissive, they are subverted. It is not a good feeling. There will be those who say Schmit is waving a red herring when he's talking about how we will never have weapons in this country. I look at it very, very narrowly, I concede that. But the point I want to make is this, the right to bear arms is a very basic right. I did not sign LB 801, not because I do not respect Senator Schellpeper and those of you who did, but...

SENATOR WARNER: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...because I believe very sincerely that there are attempts being made today to take away from individuals the right to bear arms. I feel that right was guaranteed to us, it ought to be sustained. I recognize that there are those who say you have to protect the rights of the innocent. Ladies and gentlemen, there are people in this state today who ought to be able to bear arms, to protect themselves, who can't do so. We don't have a permit system in this state. It might be that I might be conducive to siding...or to supporting your bill, Senator Chizek, and, Senator Ashford, if, along with the rest of your proposals, you would accept an amendment that would allow for a permit system, so that an individual whose life has been